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TAGS: PREL PGOV PTER MOPS UNSC EG SU

SUBJECT: DARFUR: EGYPT AND ARAB LEAGUE PLEASED WITH AU-UN ADDIS MEETING, PRESSING SUDAN TO MOVE FORWARD

Classified by Economic-Political Counselor Catherine Hill-Herndon for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

Summary

¶11. (C) The Government of Egypt (GOE) and the Arab League Secretariat (AL) are pleased with the outcome of November 16

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high-level consultations on Darfur held in Addis Ababa and hosted by the African Union (AU) and the United Nations (UN).

GOE leaders and the Arab League are pressing the Government of Sudan to publicly welcome the conclusions of those consultations and to quickly finalize terms for deployment of a hybrid UN-AU peace-keeping force. Egypt also plans to host rebel non-signatories to the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA) in Cairo starting November 22, where they will be pressed to agree to a military cease-fire and adhere to the DPA. A November 21 regional summit on Darfur, hosted by Libya and attended by leaders of Egypt, Sudan, Chad, Eritrea, and the Central African Republic will significantly affect next steps on the Darfur file. Should Khartoum agree to a UN-AU peace keeping force for Darfur, Egypt is prepared to provide significant troop contributions for a peace-keeping operation in Darfur, provided a durable cease-fire is in place, and that Khartoum accepts deployment of a hybrid AU-UN force. Egypt believes a new UN Security Council resolution is required to lay out the specifics of a Chapter VIII Darfur deployment.

Egypt and Arab League Press Sudan to Accept AU/UN Force

¶12. (C) MFA Cabinet Advisor for African Affairs Ahmed Abul Zeid told poloff on November 21 that Egypt was pressing the GOS to accept the conclusions document negotiated in Addis Ababa on November 16 by the GOS, the UN, AU, P-5, and others.

The Egyptians, he said, urged GOS Presidential Envoy Mustapha Ismail in Cairo on November 20 to accept the plan and quickly conclude details of a hybrid AU-UN force. Likewise, President Mubarak would discuss next steps with Sudanese President Bashir on November 21 at a Libyan-hosted summit that would include leaders of Chad, Eritrea, and the Central African Republic. Arab League Secretariat staff member Zeid al Sabban likewise told poloff on November 21 that Amre Moussa urged Ismail to publicly embrace the agreement reached in Addis on a hybrid force.

¶13. (C) Abul Zeid described the current diplomatic atmosphere as extremely positive, and urged Washington not to upset the "fragile situation" or "provoke the GOS" by setting deadlines or making ultimatums. Abul Zeid pointed to an "unhelpful" press report which asserted that U.S. Special Envoy Natsios set a deadline for Khartoum to accept the AU-UN proposals by the end of the year. The Sudanese are "so close to agreeing"

(to the AU-UN document); "why provoke them now?" he asked rhetorically.

Darfur Rebels Expected in Cairo

¶4. (C) Pressed for an update on reports that Darfur rebels would convene in Cairo for talks on DPA adherence this week, Abul Zeid confirmed that Egyptian intelligence was set to host Khalil Ibrahim and other (un-named) Darfur rebels beginning on November 22. Abul Zeid had few details on expected attendance or agenda items, noting that EGIS would coordinate the entire effort.

Next Steps

¶5. (C) Asked about next steps on an enhanced peace-keeping force for Darfur, Abul Zeid said that Egypt was prepared to offer "significant numbers" of troops for a Darfur operation, provided an effective ceasefire was in place and that the GOS accepted the deployment. Abul Zeid believed South Africa and Rwanda might also be prepared to send troops to Darfur, but that other North Africans were not yet prepared or willing to follow suit. Abul Zeid believed that once Khartoum negotiated and accepted specific terms for a hybrid AU-UN force, a new UNSC resolution would be required to operationalize a Chapter VIII mandate.

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